

compulsion, sometimes willingly, the governing bodies of the towns took part with the mob. At Leicester they organised the forces of law and order. To know the causes of the Rising in the towns would be to know the history of a hundred different municipalities, their law-suits and their quarrels, long buried in dust. In the country districts there was perhaps as much differentiation between manor and manor. But we have already shown the heads under which the grievances of the peasants can be summed up. As in the East of England, so in the Wirral of Cheshire, we find the serfs rising against their landlord, in this case the Abbey of Chester.<sup>1</sup> In Somerset the serfs were, in like manner, striving for their freedom. At Bridgewater they burnt title-deeds and court-rolls, marched under the royal standard, and exposed the heads of their enemies in public places. It is also at Bridgewater that we find an interesting case of a religious house forced by the parishioners to surrender its dues for the more useful purpose of supporting the vicar. The vicar appears to have been a man of the name of Frompton, who was in London when the Rising broke out. He at once left the capital and started for the West to see what could be done there. He arrived in Bridgewater in time to lead his parishioners on June 19 against the House of St. John of Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> The same grievance of paying tithe to a distant religious house drove the men of Rothley and Wartnaby, in North Leicestershire, to join the rebellion under the leadership of the curate from a neighbouring village.<sup>3</sup>

In Kent the type of man was perhaps by nature more independent and more riotous. But the grievances of Kent did not differ so entirely from those in other counties as has sometimes been supposed. Every man in Kent was, theoretically, a freeman in the eye of the law. He could sell his land, he could plead in court, he was free from many humiliating and servile dues that were customary in other shires. But, though a freeman, he still owed, in many cases, labour service on his lord's demesne,<sup>4</sup> and it was to get rid of these

<sup>1</sup> *Chester Indictment Bolls* (P. B. O.), no. 8, M. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Parl.*, iii. 105-6; *C. R. R.*, 503, Rex. 12 (E6v. 283-4).

<sup>3</sup> B6v. 252.

<sup>4</sup> Vinogradov's *Villainage in England*, 205-8; *Consuetudines Cantia*, (Sandys), 89 and 93.